

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
SSM-03 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /099 W
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O 271816Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6049
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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TEL AVIV AND JERUSALEM FOR USDEL

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PEPR PBOR EG IS XF
SUBJECT: SETTLEMENTS ISSUE IN EGYPT
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SUMMARY. PRESS PLAYS ISRAELI CABINET DELIBERATIONS ON
SETTLEMENTS POLICY AS FAVORABLE. ISRAELIS SAID TO FIND
GOE POSITION ON DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES "EXTREMELY
TOUGH". PRESS TREATS VISIBLE LACK OF PROGRESS AS RESULT
EGYPTIAN FIRMNESS, BUT MANY EGYPTIANS SEE PEACE PROCESS
GOING AWRY. AS RESULT, PUBLIC MORALE IS SLUMPING AND

EGYPTIANS LOOKING APPREHENSIVELY TOWARD BEGIN VISIT TO
U.S. END SUMMARY.

1. SETTLEMENTS. REPORTING OF ISRAELI CABINET DELIBERATIONS ON SETTLEMENT POLICY SEEKS TO PRESENT ABSENCE OF POLICY DECISION AS POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT FOR EGYPT. HEADLINES PROCLAIM WORK ON SETTLEMENTS STOPPED AND STORIES CLAIM ISRAEL HAS SHELVED PLANS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF PORT AT HQAMIT. REPORTS, HOWEVER, ALSO NOTED "ISRAELI OFFICIALS" INTERPRET LACK OF DECISION AS MEANING THERE WILL BE NO CHANGE IN SETTLEMENTS POLICY UNTIL BEGIN, DAYAN AND WEIZMAN RETURN FROM U.S. IN PROMINENTLY TREATED REMARKS, PEOPLES ASSEMBLY SPEAKER MAR'I REPORTEDLY SAID SADAT HAD TRANSFORMED U.S. ROLE FROM CONDEMNATION OF SETTLEMENTS "TO CALL FOR DISMANTLING THESE SETTLEMENTS".

2. ARMS. MAR'I ALSO TERMED U.S. WEAPONS POLICY "CONSTRUCTIVE AND BALANCED" AND BASED ON U.S. PERCEPTION THAT EGYPT MUST BE ABLE GUARANTEE ITS DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY TO NEGOTIATE WITH CONFIDENCE. HOWEVER, MAR'I STATED, "FSE DEAL DOES NOT MEET EGYPT'S NEEDS AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITH REGARD TO SECURITY OF THE REGION."

3. DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. EGYPT'S POSITION ON DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES, TRANSMITTED BY ATHERTON, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SAID PERCEIVED BY ISRAELIS AS "EXTREMELY TOUGH". BEGIN EXPECTED REJECT IT FORMALLY TO ATHERTON FEBRUARY 27.

4. COMMENT: WHILE PRESS CLINGS TO POSITION THAT PALESTINIAN QUESTION CENTRAL ELEMENT TO BE RESOLVED, GOE SEEMS MORE CONCERNED WITH SETTLEMENT ISSUE -- PRIMARILY SINAI -- AND SEES IT AS FIRST HURDLE ON WAY TO DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. WHAT HAPPENS TO SINAI IS FOR EGYPTIAN PUBLIC TEST OF POSSIBILITIES FOR OVERALL SETTLEMENT. ISRAELIS ARE VIEWED AS DETERMINED TO PREVENT BY ARTIFICE THE SURMOUNTING OF OBSTACLES TO PEACE THEY HAVE RAISED. OBSESSIVE SETTLEMENTS POLICY IS VIEWED IN THAT LIGHT AND INTERNAL ISRAELI DIFFERENCES ON IT SEEN AS RUSE TO AVOID CHANGING IT. DISTINCTIVE TURN TO U.S. FOR "MORE ACTIVE ROLE" TO COUNTER "ISRAELI ADHERENCE TO OLD MENTALITY" IS INEVITABLE. DESPITE CONTINUING PUBLIC LINE THAT SADAT HAS PLACED ZIONISTS ON DEFENSIVE, MANY FEAR RESULTS OF BEGIN VISIT ON USG. EFFECT ON PUBLIC MORALE WILL BE SEVERE IF BEGIN IS SEEN AS SUCCESSFUL IN ESCAPING "PUNISHMENT" FOR SETTLEMENTS OR PRODUCING MORE FORTHCOMING WEAPONS POLICY TOWARDS ISRAEL. EILTS

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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